

AGM 18.10.21

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

Good evening everybody.

This is the Membership Secretary's report for 2021, and my last as Acting Membership Secretary.

As of today, our membership stands at 152, comprising 145 Full Members, 4 Student Members and 3 Retired Members, which is a net increase of 5 since last year's meeting, which of course we are very pleased about. During the year we have welcomed 19 Full Members and 2 Student Members into membership. All the new Full Members are members of the company limited by guarantee.

New members

Over the course of the year we have interviewed 20 candidates for membership; one candidate withdrew her application, and 19 applications were approved. The languages offered by our new Full Members are: Polish (4); Italian (2); Lithuanian (2); Bulgarian (2); Spanish; Portuguese; Romanian; Russian; Farsi; Pashto; Thai; Vietnamese and Japanese. Both of our new Student Members are Russian speakers. We are very pleased to see some of our new members here tonight, and I'm sure that they will all be a great asset to our Association.

Student Membership

Student Membership has been available since 2015 to those studying on a course leading to a recognised interpreting qualification, such as the DPSI or the DPI. Work on this project began in 2018. We hope that

our Student Members will benefit from attending our CPD events and networking with experienced practitioners, and in the long run we believe that APCI will benefit, because once they complete their initial training we hope that they will want to apply for Full membership. In March this year Chairman Alan Thompson and Director Albina Homer gave a talk to an audience of students from the International School of Linguists on the benefits of joining a membership organisation, and that recently gave rise to an application for membership. Our thanks are due to Albina Homer for her work on this project.

Recruitment

So, what are we doing to recruit new members?

One valuable source of enquiries for membership is the conversations we have with interpreters about **APCI Response** assignments, which can be a valuable opportunity to tell them about the benefits of APCI membership. Another source of enquiries is our CPD events, to which non-members are often invited as well as members. Our policy has always been to put on high-quality, professional events which portray a good image of APCI, and those who attend our events often request information about membership.

Since our new website went live in September 2020, it has been possible for the first time to apply for membership on line, and it seems that applicants have found this facility very convenient, since 100% of applications received in the last twelve months have been made via the website. It is not currently possible to apply for Student Membership on line but we have asked our developer to add this functionality as soon as possible.

But, as ever, the best possible method of recruitment is personal recommendation. We hope that whenever you meet other interpreters, you will tell them about our activities and point them towards our website.

We continue to interview all applicants for membership. Interviews now take place on the Zoom Meetings platform, which has made the process more accessible to applicants living outside London and the South-East. We have already seen an increase in the number of applications from all over the country. We are very grateful to those members who have willingly given up their time to take part in the interview process.

Retention

Now, a word or two about retention.

When we met a year ago, we had 143 Full Members. During the 2021 renewal season, 9 members retired and 9 members lapsed for a variety of reasons, making a total of 18 losses, which was 12.6% of our membership. However, during the year, 1 member who had previously lapsed has rejoined and 19 new members have joined, which makes a net gain over the year of 2, or 1.4% of our membership.

Like all membership associations, every year we lose a number of our members, for various reasons. This year, 9 members retired, representing 50% of our lapses, and this is a trend which we expect to continue over the next few years, as the average age of our members is very high, at 58 years and 9 months. We need to make a concerted effort to recruit younger members in order to ensure that our association is able to continue into the long term, and indeed the

average age of the new members who joined us this year is 46 years and 5 months.

Renewals

Next, renewals.

The renewals season lasts from 1 January to 15 March in each year, and all renewals should be completed by 15 March. This year the process was slower than in previous years, and by the end of January only 33 renewals had been completed, rising to 72 by the end of February and 84 by 15 March, or 59% of our members. On 15 March, as required by our Articles, 20 lapse letters were sent out to members who had not paid their subscription; two of these subsequently renewed, resulting in a net loss of 18. The renewals cycle was finally completed at the end of June.

This year you will have various alternative ways of renewing your membership: by post, by e-mail or on the new website. More details will be made available in December. In line with the Directors' new policy, we will not send your renewal documents by post unless you specifically ask us to so.

Membership Card

I hope you liked the new design of the membership card, which was rolled out this year. It has been well received by members. You will see that it uses the same colour palette as our new website. I hope you will make use of it to promote APCI by wearing it round your neck whenever you attend an interpreting assignment.

Promoting APCI

There are plenty of other things that you can do to promote APCI. I would encourage you to talk to your colleagues about APCI and tell them about the great work we are doing here; we also have plenty of ***APCI Response*** cards with our telephone number which you can hand out to work providers, and hopefully increase the number of jobs going through the call centre.